

The Surface Transportation Reauthorization provides the funding for federal transportation projects across the nation. Most of the funds are allocated through block-grants for state transportation improvement plans. In addition, the act sets funds aside for high priority projects within individual congressional districts. Each Member of Congress has the opportunity to nominate district projects for inclusion in this bill.

While I believe this is an important opportunity to ensure that federal transportation dollars are used to support projects in our area where the federal government has a legitimate role, I am also concerned by our escalating federal deficit and the urgent need to reduce federal spending. As such, I carefully evaluated each local request to ensure that they met certain criteria and were deserving of funding from federal taxpayers. First and foremost, the project must have an identifiable federal nexus. It must also be a top regional priority, demonstrate state and local funding support, and be completed within the lifespan of the highway bill (by 2014). While I received requests for over \$130 million in federal funding, I submitted two project requests totaling \$25 million for the committee's consideration. One is the widening of Interstate 5, a project that has regional and state support, and a road through federal lands in Butte County that is the primary escape route from a fire-prone area. For more information on the projects and the requested amounts please [click here](#).